

Epi Update for Friday, December 14, 2018
Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology (CADE)
Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH)

Items for this week's Epi Update include:

- **Pertussis cases among Amish**
- **Consider risk and symptoms when interpreting cholera test results**
- **CDC updates guidance on consuming romaine lettuce**
- **West Nile virus in Iowa, 2018**
- **Say no to raw dough**
- **In the news: What's lurking in your stadium food?**
- **In the news: Fentanyl is the deadliest drug in America, CDC confirms**
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Pertussis cases among Amish

A total of 124 pertussis cases have been reported in Iowa so far this year, with more investigations pending. Many of the cases have been unvaccinated persons associated with Amish communities. Please consider pertussis as a potential diagnosis for patients who have compatible signs and symptoms, especially among those associated with Amish communities or other groups that refuse vaccinations. When possible, obtain a proper nasopharyngeal (NP) swab or aspirate for diagnosis by PCR or culture. Patients diagnosed with pertussis should stay home until five full days of appropriate antibiotic treatment or until their cough has lasted 21 days. Persons with pertussis are most contagious during the 2 weeks after their cough has started. Pertussis spreads easily from person to person through coughing and sneezing. One person with pertussis can infect up to 12 to 15 other people. Babies are at greatest risk for serious complications of pertussis. About half of babies younger than 1 year old who get pertussis are hospitalized, and 1 out of 100 babies who get treatment in the hospital die.

For more information, visit wiki.idph.iowa.gov/epimanual/Home/CategoryID/100.

Consider risk and symptoms when interpreting cholera test results

Healthcare providers are strongly encouraged to consider a history of international travel (cholera is not endemic in the U.S.) and compatible symptoms prior to diagnosing and starting treatment based solely on PCR results that indicate cholera. Cholera PCR tests are known to be quite sensitive. A test with greater sensitivity can result in more false positives (Type I Error) and therefore a positive result is not as useful for ruling in a diagnosis. Public health waits for culture confirmation at the State Hygienic Laboratory prior to taking public health action on such cases.

CDC updates guidance on consuming romaine lettuce

CDC, Canada, and FDA have been investigating a multistate outbreak of *E.coli* 0157:H7 linked to romaine lettuce harvested from the Central Coastal growing regions in northern and central California.

As of December 13, 2018, CDC has updated their consumer advisory to U.S. consumers to not eat, and retailers and restaurants to not serve or sell, any romaine lettuce harvested from certain counties in the Central Coastal growing regions of northern and central California. These counties include Monterey, San Benito, and Santa Barbara. Consumers should check bags or boxes of romaine lettuce for a label indicating where the lettuce was harvested. If you do not know where the romaine is from, do not eat it.

For more information on this outbreak, visit www.cdc.gov/ecoli/2018/o157h7-11-18/index.html

West Nile virus in Iowa, 2018

In 2018, Iowa experienced an increase in West Nile virus activity. In total, 103 human cases were identified. This is a 300 percent increase compared to the five year average. Eight presumptive viremic blood donors and five West Nile virus-related deaths were also identified. Surveillance also identified 102 mosquito samples and 16 horses that tested positive for West Nile virus.

For more information on West Nile virus, visit www.idph.iowa.gov/cade/disease-information/west-nile-virus.

Say no to raw dough

CDC has released newly updated materials reminding people not to eat raw dough this holiday season. Although many people realize that raw or undercooked eggs represent a potential foodborne illness risk, many do not realize that flour is a raw agricultural product and can also be contaminated with bacteria in the field or during production. Until fully cooked, foods made with flour could contain pathogens. A 2016 *E. coli* outbreak linked to raw flour made 63 people around the U.S. sick. Flour products also have long shelf lives, so it is important to check flour for past recalls and dispose of recalled product.

A few basic tips to share with patients include:

- Do not taste or eat any raw dough or batter.
- Follow recipe or package directions for proper cooking temperatures and times.
- Keep raw foods such as flour or eggs separate from ready-to-eat foods.
- Wash your hands before and after preparing food and before eating.

For more information, visit www.cdc.gov/features/no-raw-dough/index.html.

In the news: What's lurking in your stadium food?

www.espn.com/espn/story/_/id/25499595/health-inspection-reports-find-violations-nfl-nhl-nba-mlb-stadiums-cause-foodborne-illness-2018-espn-lines

In the news: Fentanyl is the deadliest drug in America, CDC confirms

www.cnn.com/2018/12/12/health/drugs-overdose-fentanyl-study/index.html

In the news: An ancient case of the plague could rewrite history

www.theatlantic.com/science/archive/2018/12/4900-year-old-case-plague-sweden/577315/

Infographic: Holiday food safety



To view in full size, visit

www.cdc.gov/foodsafety/images/socialmedia/Keep-Foods-Separate-2018-1200px.jpg.

Meeting announcements and training opportunities

None

Have a healthy and happy week!

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